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FM AMEMBASSY MOGADISHU

TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 5992

INFO RUTABA/AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA 6282

RUQMDJ/AMEMBASSY DJIBOUTI 424

RUQMKM/AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM 1085

RUEHNP/AMEMBASSY NAIROBI 2587

BT

C O N F I D E N T I A L MOGADISHU 4946 COMBINED SECTION

E.O. 12065: GDS 9/2/87 (PETTERSON, DONALD K.) DR-M

TAGS: MPOL, PEPR, PINS, SO

SUBJ: SIAD VOICES FEARS ABOUT SOMALIA'S SECURITY

1. (C - ENTIRE TEXT.)

2. SUMMARY: PRESIDENT SIAD AND I HAD A LONG, RAMBLING CONVERSATION TUESDAY NIGHT, SEPT. 1. IF THERE WAS A THEME TO OUR TALK, IT WAS HIS APPARENT CONCERN ABOUT SOMALIA'S SECURITY AND HIS FEELING THAT THE US IS NOT DEMONSTRATING CLEARLY ENOUGH THAT IT CAN BE COUNTED UPON BY ITS FRIENDS IN THIS PART OF THE WORLD. HE ASKED WASHINGTON TO ANSWER FOUR SPECIFIC QUESTIONS THAT HE PUT TO ME. END SUMMARY.

3. AT THE OUTSET OF OUR TALK, I PASSED ON TO HIM THE MESSAGE FROM THE DEPARTMENT REGARDING HIS REQUEST FOR A MEETING WITH PRESIDENT REAGAN (STATE 225685). HE MADE NO COMMENT. I THEN REFERRED TO THE TELEGRAM FROM THE SOMALI EMBASSY IN ADEN WHICH THE DIRECTOR GENERAL OF THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS HAD

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State Dept. review completed

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SHOWED ME AUGUST 18 (MOGADISHU 4563), AND WHICH HAD WARNED THAT MILITARY ACTIVITY IN ADEN MIGHT BE AIMED AT SOMALIA. I TOLD HIM WE HAD NO EVIDENCE WHATEVER WHICH WOULD GIVE CREDENCE TO THE SOMALI FEAR THAT AN INVASTION FROM ADEN OR SOCOTRA MIGHT BE IN THE WIND. I SAID IF THERE HAD BEEN ANY UNUSUAL MILITARY ACTIVITY IN ADEN AS THE SOMALI EMBASSY REPORTED, IT MIGHT HAVE BEEN ASSOCIATED WITH THE THEN IMPENDING VISIT OF QADHAFI AND MENGISTU.

4. SIAD THEN MENTIONED WHAT HE CLAIMED WAS CONTINUED CONCEN- TRATION OF ETHIOPIAN FORCES AT CERTAIN AREAS ALONG THE BORDER (OPPOSITE DOLO, GOLDOGOB, BELET WEYN AND THE AREA JUST TO THE WEST OF THE JUNCTURE OF THE ETHIOPIA, DJIBOUTI AND SOMALIA BORDERS). HE WONDERED WHAT THE "REAL AIM" OF THIS BUILDUP WAS. WAS IT IN PREPARATION FOR A FUTURE ATTACK OR WAS THERE SOME OTHER REASON BEHIND IT? WHEN I RESPONDED THAT IT COULD WELL BE NO MORE THAN A CONSOLIDATION BY THE ETHIOPIANS OF THEIR CONTROL OVER THE AREAS INTO WHICH THEY HAD MVED, HE REPLIED THAT HE DISAGREED BECAUSE THERE WERE NO MILITARY ENGAGEMENTS TAKING PLACE IN THE OGADEN AND CONSEQUENTLY NO NEED FOR CON- SOLIDATION. HE ASKED IF WASHINGTON COULD ASSESS THE SITUATION AND TELL HIM WHAT WE BELIEVED IS BEHIND THE CONCENTRATION OF ETHIOPIAN FORCES.

5. HE SAID HE HAD GIVEN INSTRUCTIONS TO BOTH THE NATIONAL SECURITY SERVICE AND THE MILITARY TO BE COMPLETELY OPEN WITH US EMBASSY OFFICERS. ONE RESULT OF THIS WAS THE RECENT VISITS BY US MILITARY ATTACHES TO VARIOUS ARMY UNITS. FROM OUR OB- SERVATIONS, HE SAID, WE NOW WERE THOROUGHLY AWARE OF THE CUR- RENT HIGHLY WEAKENED STATE OF THE ARMY (SEE DATT REPORTS OF AUGUST 13, 10 AND 27). THAT BEING THE CASE, HE WANTED TO KNOW WHAT WASHINGTON'S REACTION WAS. I RESPONDED THAT I HAD NOT RECEIVED ANY COMMENT ON THIS FROM WASHINGTON.

6. TURNING TO ANOTHER SUBJECT, HE SAID, "SUPPOSE ETHIOPIA, LIBYA AND SOUTH YEMEN AGREED TO INVADE SOMALIA, WHAT WOULD THE US DO?" I ANSWERED THAT WE SAW NO INDICATIONS OF PREPARATIONS FOR OR A PLAN TO INVADE SOMALIA, ALTHOUGH CLEARLY ONE RESULT OF THE PACT BETWEEN ETHIOPIA, LIBYA AND THE PDRY WOULD BE INCREASED ASSISTANCE TO THE SOMALI SALVATION FRONT, GIVING IT A GREATER ABILITY TO CONDUCT CROSS-BORDER RAIDS AND URBAN

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TERRORIST ACTIVITY. SIAD RESPONDED THAT HE WAS NOT WORRIED ABOUT THE SSF. HE WENT ON THAT WHILE THERE MIGHT NOT BE ANY SIGN RIGHT NOW OF INVATION PREPARATIONS, IT REMAINED A POSSIBILITY THAT THE ETHIOPIANS, LIBYANS AND SOUTH YEMENIS COULD AT SOME POINT DECIDE THAT THE ONLY WAY TO OVERTHROW HIS GOVERNMENT WOULD BE TO INVADE SOMALIA. THEREFORE, HE WANTED TO KNOW WHAT THE US WOULD DO IN SUCH AN EVENTUALITY. HE SAID, "I WOULD LIKE TO PUT THIS TO WASHINGTON." HE SAID THIS WAS IMPORTANT TO HIM AND HIS COLLEAGUES IN THE GOVERNMENT. IF THEY KNEW THEY COULD COUNT ON THE US IN EXTREMIS, THEY WOULD BE ABLE TO PLAN FOR THEIR SECURITY NEEDS ACCORDINGLY; IF, ON THE OTHER HAND, THEY KNEW THEY COULD NOT COUNT ON THE US, THEY WOULD HAVE TO PLAN IN ANOTHER WAY.

7. SIAD DESCRIBED AN APPROACH MADE IN LONDON BY THE SOMALI NATIONAL MOVEMENT TO A PROMINENT SOMALI WHO LATER RECOUNTED THE INCIDENT TO HIM. THIS PERSON TOLD SIAD THAT THE SNM HAD OFFERED HIM MONEY AND A HOUSE IF HE WOULD STAY IN LONDON AND SUPPORT THE SNM. SIAD TOLD ME THAT EVIDENTLY THE ORGANIZATION IS WELL FINANCED, AND ASKED IF WASHINGTON COULD FIND OUT WHO IS BEHIND THE SNM.

8. SIAD DECLARED THAT, UNLIKE HIS BRETHREN IN THE ARAB LEAGUE, HE WAS "HAPPY WHEN YOU SHOT DOWN THE LIBYAN AIRPLANES." IT WAS GOOD THAT THE US HAD SHOWED FIRMNESS IN THE FACE OF PROVOCATION BY QADHAFI, WHOM HE CHARACTERIZED AS AN "IGNORANT MADMAN."

9. HOWEVER, HE SAID, THE US NEEDED TO DO MORE ON A SUSTAINED BASIS TO SHOW THAT IT WILL BACK ITS FRIENDS, THOSE IN THIS REGION OF THE WORLD WHO "ARE THREATENED BY THE ARROGANT THREE" (I.E., ETHIOPIA, LIBYA AND THE PORY). IN HIS OPINION THE US HAS NOT DONE ENOUGH TO INSPIRE CONFIDENCE AMONG ITS FRIENDS.

10. COMMENT: EXCEPT FOR HIS QUESTIONS, THERE WAS LITTLE NEW IN WHAT SIAD TOLD ME. WE HAVE HEARD MANY TIMES HIS EXPRESSIONS OF CONCERN ABOUT SOMALIA'S SECURITY AND WHAT HE PERCEIVES TO BE INSUFFICIENT US SUPPORT. HOWEVER, THIS TIME HE DWELLED ON THIS THEME MORE THAN USUAL. THIS PROBABLY STEMS FROM APPREHENSION HERE ABOUT THE RAMIFICATIONS OF THE AGREEMENT SIGNED BY QADHAFI, MENGISTU AND AL-HASANI. FROM THE SOMALI VIEW,

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THE MOST OBVIOUS TARGETS OF THIS PACT ARE SOMALIA, SUDAN AND  
OMAN. I BELIEVE SIAD'S EXPRESSED WORRY ABOUT THE NEED FOR  
MORE EVIDENCE OF US SUPPORT FOR SOMALIA MIGHT ALSO BE A RESULT  
OF INCREASING DOMESTIC DISSATISFACTION WITH HIS LEADERSHIP.  
PETTERSON

END OF MESSAGE

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